OUR FLAG

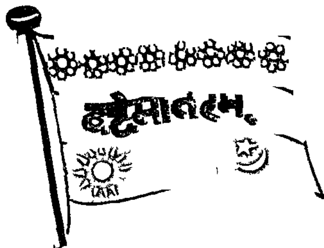
ORIGIN

THE evolution of the Indian Nat onal Flag reflects the political hist ry of the country Th v r ous political trends communal tensions wa s of enthu siasm can all be seen in the people s attit de to the flag What the idol is to the worshipper the flag is to the freedom seeker — a tangible symbol of his aspirat ons

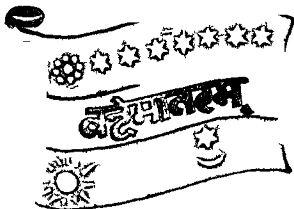
The first flag in India is said to have b en hoisted on August 7 1906 in the Parsee Baga Square (Green Park) in Calcutta The flag wa composed of horizontal stripes of red yellow and gr en

Th f hi f f m ti ca b tra d Many b liev th t th fl g w h i t d ly i P i d B li

The strip on the top had eight white lotuses embossed on it in a row On the yellow strip were the words *Bande Mataram* in deep blue Devanagari script The last strip had a white sun on the left and a white crescent and a star on the right

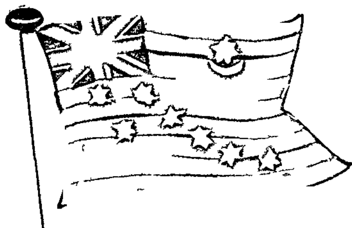


The second flag to be hoisted was by Madame Cama and her band of exiled revolutionaries i Paris in 1907 (according to some in 1905) This was very similar to the f rst flag except that the top strip had a lotus above with se en stars (the Saptarshi) This flag was exhibited at a socialist conference in Berl n also



Thi p i t i t si l it is d btf l wh th r th re was a lot r t

By the time our third flag went up our political struggle had taken a definite shape During the Home Rule movement Dr Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak hoisted it in 1917 This flag had five red and four green horizontal stripes and in the left hand top corne (the pole end) was the Union Jack occupying one fourth of the space and the seven stars in the centre There was also a crescent and a star ir one corner

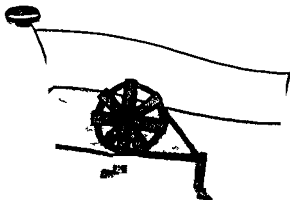


It was a sign of the t me The inclus on of the Union Jack symboliz d the ideal of Dominion St t s

The prese ce of the U o Jack however made it generally una[illegible] able The political ompromis that it implied was not popular The call for w leadersh p b ought Moha das Karamchand Gandhi to the foref ont in 1921 and through him the f rst Tricolo r During the sess on of the All India Con[illegible] gress Committee meeting at Bezwada (now V jay wada) at this time an [illegible] youth prepared a flag and brought it to Gandhiji It was two colo[illegible] and green—representing the two major comm nities Gandhiji [illegible] the addition of a wh te strip to repr sent the rest of India s com[illegible] and the *Charkha* — a symbol of progress

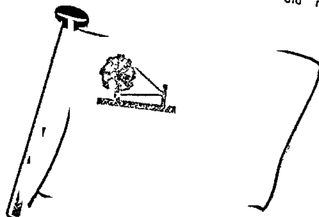
Thus the Tricolour was born but t had not yet been off [illegible] by any resol tion of the All India Congress Committee Gandh[illegible] made it popular and it was hoist d o all Congress occasions

In 1931 when the A I C C met at Ka achi a resolut[illegible] stressing the ne d for a flag which wo ld be officially [illegible]



Congress There was already conside able controversy over the signif cance of the colours in the flag Communal t oubles had set in The two major communities were at the parting of the ways and the stress was on communal interpretation

Meanwhile a committee of seven was appointed to elicit opinion on the choice of a flag It suggested a pla n saffron flag with a *Charkha* in reddish brown in the extreme left corner The A I C C did not accept the suggestion

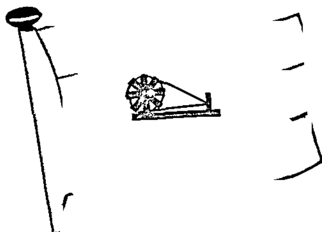


1931 was a landmark in the history of the flag A resolution was passed adopting a tricolour flag as our National Emblem This flag the forbear of the pres nt flag was a saffron white and green It was however

clearly stated that it bore no communal signif cance and was to be interpret d thus

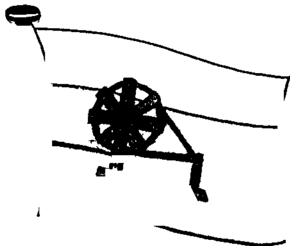
Saffron for courage and sacr f ce
White for truth and peace
Green for faith and chivalry

It also carried a *Charkha* in blue on the wh te band The size was three breadths by two breadths



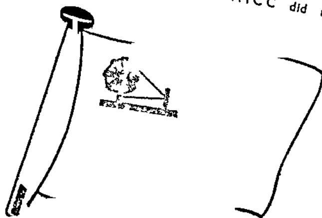
By the above resolution for the first time the flag received official recognition as the National Flag Henceforwa d it became our Flag and the symbol of our determination to be free On July 22 1947 with the attain ment of independence the Constituent Assembly adopted it as free India s National Flag The colours and their signif cance remain the same The *Dharma Chakra* of Emperor Asoka was adopted instead of the *Charkha*

*Th Co g P ty till has th *Ch kh* h p ty fl g



Congress There was already considerable controversy over the signif cance of the colours in the flag Communal troubles had set in The two major communities were at the parting of the ways and the stress was on communal interpretation

Meanwhile a committee of seven was appointed to elicit opinion on the choice of a flag It suggested a plain saffron flag with a *Cha kha* in reddish brown in the extreme left corner The A I C C did not accept the suggestion



1931 was a landmark in the history of the flag A resolution was passed adopting a tricolour flag as our National Emblem This flag the forbear of the present flag was a saffron white and green It was however

be there and not the rest of the *Charkha* i e the spindle and the stri which created this confusion The essential part of the *Charkha* should be there that is the wheel So the old traditions continue in regard to the *Charkha* and the wheel But what type of wheel should we have? Our minds went back to many wheels which had appeared in many places and which all of us have seen the one at the top of the capital of the Asoka column and in many other places That wheel is a symbol of India s ancient culture it is a symbol of the many things that India had stood for through the ages

At the end of the speech Pandit Nehru presented the Flag to the Assembly saying So Sir now I present to you not only the resolution but the Flag itself

There are two of these National Flags before you One is of silk—the one I am holding—and the other is of cotton Khadi

U S E

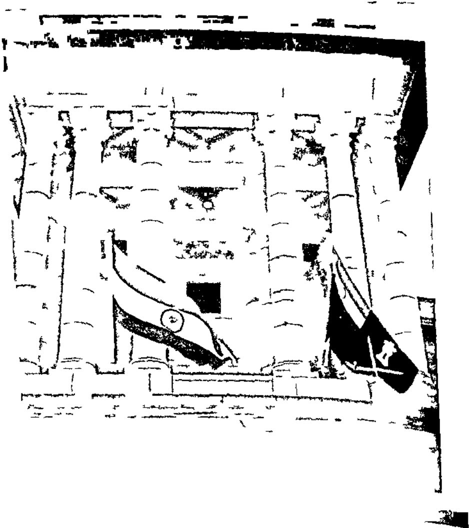
EVERY free country in the world has an elaborate and rigid etiquette connected with the use of its National Flag The best way to respect a country's flag is to learn and abide by the formalities laid down regarding its use The ceremonial attending the hoisting lowering saluting or half masting of the flag must be adhered to by all institutions as well as individuals The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Armed Forces Headquarters have drawn up the regulations ruling the use of the flag

An equally important point in our code of honour should be that the material size and colours used in the flag are standardized Nothing is so undignified or repugnant as a limp discoloured or disproportionately made flag At the request of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Army Head quarters the Indian Standards Institution ha undertaken to standardize the dyes and colours material constructional details and sizes of the flag

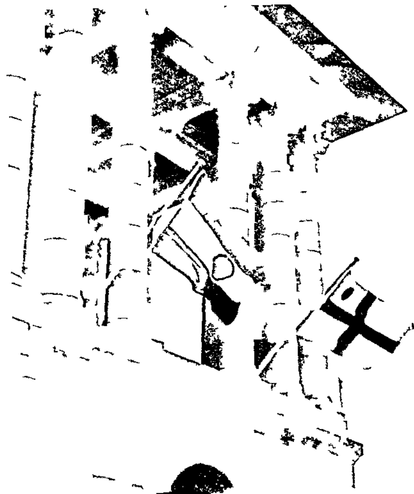
Their specifications cover the essential requirements of the National Flag of India and all flags will have to comply with these specifcations Accordingly it has been provisionally decided that there will be six standard sizes for the flag including those meant for cars Before a final decision is taken in the matter the dyes and cloth and all other materials needed for a flag will undergo rigid scientific tests including the running out of colours durability of cloth and weaving flaws etc

By virtue of the resolution of July 22 1947 the Tricolour was accepted as the National Flag of India The resolution of course furnished no details As standardization and uniformity are very important for the dignity of a flag the Indian Standards Institution was asked to prepare self contained specifications for our National Flag These specifications are being worked out and all manufacturers will have to comply with the terms of these specifications

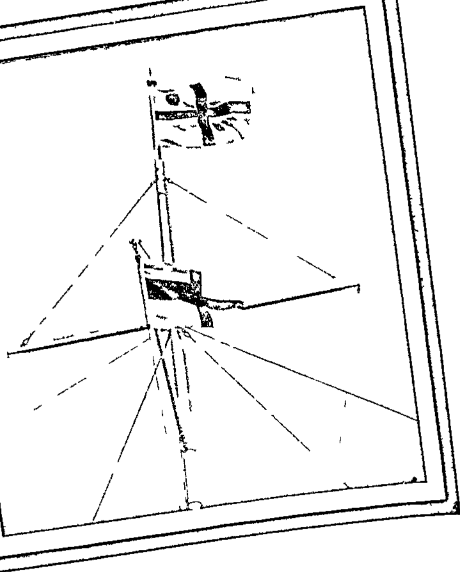
Two of the flag colours have been described as India Saffron and India Green These two colours do not yet occur in the standard colour tables of the world India Green or India Saffron being peculiar to the National Flag of

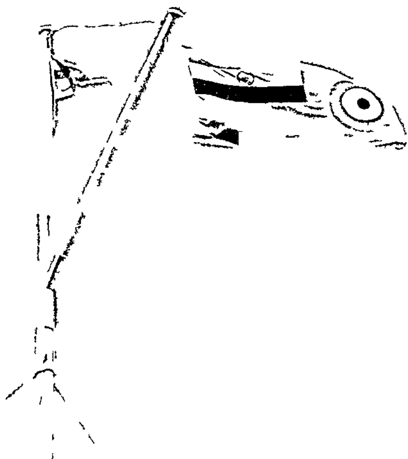


The Co n na de in Cl ef I id an A my fl es tuo flag ts de h off ce—the Flag Nat o al Ind d h r onal ank flag



The National Flag and the personal flag of the Commander in Chief Indian Navy outside Vice Admiral Parry's office in New Delhi





At the I A F Station New Delhi the Air Force Ensign is worn at the gaff while the Commanding Officer's rank flag flies at the mast head

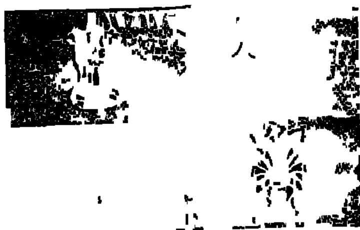
India will have to be scientifically determined by trichomatic methods and accordingly defined in precise terms in the Indian Colour Standard for the National Flag

There will be a wheel with twenty four spokes in navy blue colour in the centre of the white piece on both sides of the flag The wheel may be painted printed superimposed or embroidered The superimposed cloth shall be of the same material as that of the body The design and make up of the flag will be in accordance with a specified design and in conformity with the sealed sample held in the custody of the Indian Standards Institution

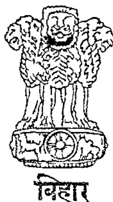
Our flag has always been of hand spun and hand woven material and as the general sentiment of the people and of the Prime Minister still seems to fa our hand spun and hand woven material for the flag the Indian Standards Institution is trying out tests on ha d spun cotton silk and woollen materials

Certain courtesies are du to a National Flag which are recognized all over the wo ld These are followed in India too and our Government too has laid down the rules regarding the use of our flag

The President of the Indian Republic like the heads of other States has a special personal flag which is flown along with the National Flag wherever the President happens to be



Similarly the Go ernors and the *Rajpramukhs* are also entitled to personal flags



Courtesy to National Flag

All flags are placed to the left of the National Flag if they hang in a line If flags are raised the National Flag is placed higher than the other flags

When carried in a procession it must be borne high on the right shoulder of the standard bearer and carried in front of the procession

When the National Flag is raised along with other flags it must be the first to go up and the last to come down It must never be lowered in the presence of other flags In the Armed Forces the Flag National India as it is termed and the Army Flag the White Ensign or the I A F Ensign are hoisted and lowered simultaneously

At a meeting the Flag should be behind the speaker and high above his head and above all other decorations

There should be nothing written on the Flag When a Flag is no longer fit for use it should never be destroyed publicly or used as a rag or thrown in the dust bin

The Flag should never be a means of adornment It should not be spread on the speaker s table at a gathering It should not form borders of *sarees* or be used as a print pattern or for any other commercial purpose

In short it should not occur anywhere where it does not serve the purpose of a flag *

Referring to the use of the Flag the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued the following communique and laid down rules of usage although the whole code has not yet been finally adopted

While it was appropriate to use the National Flag on all occasions during the struggle for freedom it is felt that now that freedom has been won there should be well-defined regulations for the use of the Flag as is the practice in other countries

Display on Buildings

1 Normally the Flag should be flown on important Government buildings at the Centre and in the States such as High Courts Secretariats Commissioners Offices Collectorates Jails and offices of the district boards and municipalities

2 All frontier areas may fly the National Flag at some special point

The following have the privilege of flying the Flag at their residence

1 The Ministers and Speakers of the Central and States Governments

2 The Chairmen of the Upper Chambers wh ever they exist

3 The Ministers of State in the Central Government

4 Regional Commissioners Chief Commissioners Commissioners Deputy Commissioners and Collectors of States

5 The Governors of all States have been allowed a personal flag on which will be embossed the name or the emblem of the State they represent This flag will also fly on their residence when on tour and wherever they stay in their State

A p l S ctl 69 f th Trad M k A prohibi th h l d f th N l 1 Fl g i y t d b l lli g p f i Th p bli h ld p ct h tim t and d f ch p l l

6 *Rajpramukhs* may also fly the Flag on their residence together with their own State flags if they so choose

7 India s Representatives in foreign countries should fly the Flag on their residence and also on their office where they are not in the same premises

8 If the President or the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister while visiting a State stays with the Governor in the Government House his flag or in the case of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister the National Flag should also be flown on the top of the main building or on the top of the wing where he may reside or in a conspicuous part of the fore court or the main approach

(a) If the Governor stays in a Circuit House within his State and the President the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister also stays in the same house as his guest the same practice as above should be followed

(b) If the President the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister proceeds to a provincial town where the Governor is not present the President s flag or the National Flag should be conspicuously displayed on the flag staff or on an improvized pole on the top of the residence

(c) If the President the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister visits any class of State the same procedure should be followed

9 The use of the Flag by the Army Navy and Air Force is governed by special rules As will be seen from the various photographs the National Flag is now being incorporated in the Armed Forces flag So after the 26th January 1950 no separate National Flag will be flown by them

10 On special occasions like the Independence Day celebrations National Week January 26 and Mahatma Gandhi s Birthday as well as any other particular day of national rejoicing the use of the Flag will be unrestricted

Display on Cars

1 The Flag may be flown on th cars of the Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State Speakers both Central and State Chief Commissioners Regional Commissioners and India s Representatives in foreign countries

2 Deputy Ministers in the Central Government

3 Ruling Princes and *Rajpramukhs* may also fly the Flag on their rs together with their own State flags if they so choose

4 The President and the Governors have their own special flags ie Governors when outside their States should fly the National Flag

5 Chairmen of the Upper Chambers where they exist

Ioisting and Hauling

The hoisting of a flag is a solemn occasion Though it varies in tail generally speaking all over the world a flag is hoisted with the singing the National Anthem In civilian life the hoisting of the National Flag is t a daily routine It is only on special occasions and on days of national nportance that a fl g is hoisted An import nt person is invited for the oisting ceremony and while the people attending stand respectfully ound the flag with bowed heads and while the National Anthem is layed the flag rope is pulled and very solemnly and slowly the flag goes up reat care is taken that the flag does not go up with the wrong colour on op If a band happens to be present it plays the National A them ometimes the National Anthem is also sung A ry beautiful ceremony to tie up flowers in a flag and when it goes up and flutters in the wind e flowers come showering down

In the Armed Forces however the hoisting of the Flag National India r their own flag is a daily routine They have therefore worked out an laborate and formal etiquette for the daily hoisting and lowering of a flag he three Services differ from each other in the ceremonies conne ted with he hoisting and lowering of a flag However they all play the National Anthem they all come to attention and the Officers salute as the National lag goes up In cases where two flags are hoisted the National Flag and the articular Armed Forces Fl g both go up and come down simultaneously

Normally speaking the Flag flies from sunrise to sunset In the Indian Navy however it goes up at a fixed time i e 8 o clock in the morning and comes down at sunset

Half-mast

In the event of the death of an important personage or mourning affecting the nation all the National Flags including the Services Flags are brought down to half mast To bring a flag to half mast it is first hoisted to the close up and then lowered to the half mast Similarly it is first raised to the close up and then lowered Even our Embassies in foreign lands and our ships in foreign waters or ports fly the Flag at half mast in courtesy on occasions of mourning in the country where they are located On such occasions special orders are issued regarding the half masting of the Flag Sometimes the Flag is flown half mast in the morning but raised to close up in the afternoon

Just as we make known our grief through the Flag so also we represent through it our jubilation and rejoicing On special occasions many more flags in varying sizes are put out to denote the festive spirit Among the Services the most colourful treat is offered by the Navy A naval ship dressed over all is a beautiful sight Flags of various colours selected from the Naval Code are put up on dressing lines from end to end of the ship

In the Services

It is in the Armed Forces that the attitude towards the National Flag has undergone a revolution With Independence repressed sentiments have been released The Armed Forces have accepted the National Flag as a proud and conspicuous feature of their life Again it is in the Armed Forces that the complete regulations regarding the colours are followed The Services are largely responsible for introducing to the public the correct usage and etiquette of a flag a strict observance of which is part of their daily drill

ARMY

The Army Flag is rectangular—scarlet with cross swords and Asoka lions in the centre in yellow The Army Flag will be flown

1 at Command Headquarters on such special occasions of purely army character as the G O C in C may decide It will however not be flown in place of Flag National India at places and on occasions *where and when it is now officially flown*

2 by Sports Associations if they care to obtain a flag on payment and on occasions when representative matches are played





3 On all Services buildings where it was customary to fly the Union Jack (Generally speaking all that the Services have to do is to issue directives saying that the Flag National India shoud be flown wherever the Union Jack flew before)

4 At all ceremon al parades where the Union Jack was flown before

5 At the res dence of Commanders up to and including Sub area and Brigade Commanders

6 At the residence of all commandants of Army Headquarter Schools of the rank of Br gad e a d above

7 Formation Headquarters down to and incl si e Bde Sub reas w ll fly two flags the Flag National Ind a and the Formation Flag



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2 by Sports Associations if they care to obtain a flag on payment and on occasions when representative matches are played

2 The appropriate rank flag of the formation or unit commander is to be flown at the mast head and the new I A F Ensign at the peak or gaff

3 The I A F Ensign will be hoisted daily at formation Headquarters and Air Force stations if however the station is on a care and maintenance basis the Ensign will not be flown

4 The hours for hoisting and hauling down the Ensign will necessarily vary in different places and at different seasons of the year but will be usually at the first convenient morning parade and at the hour for mounting of guards and duties

5 Where the Ensign is flown under paragraph 4 it will be hoisted at the peak or gaff It will be hauled down at sunset The formation or unit flag will not be hauled down at sunset

6 At the hoisting and hauling down of the Ensign the guard will turn out The following ceremonial will then be carried out

(a) Hoisting of Ensign Attention will be ordered or sounded the Ensign hoisted the general salute ordered or sounded and the guard will present arms

(b) Hauling down of Ensign Attention will be ordered or sounded the Ensign hauled down the guard and sentries whose posts are within hearing of the trumpet call or with in sight of the Ensign will present arms Retreat will be sounded

(c) When Attention is ordered or sounded all officers and airmen within hearing will stand at attention face the flag staff and officers will salute whilst the Ersign is being hoisted or hauled down

On occasions of mourning when the Ensign is ordered to be flown at half mast throughout the day it will be hoisted to close up in the morning and immediately lowered to half mast At sunset the Ensign will be hoisted to close up before being hauled down On such occasions the formation or unit commander s flag will remain flying at its original position

8 Instructions for the flying of I A F Ensign at half mast will be issued by I A F Headquarters as and when necessary Offcers Commanding will await instructions from this Headquarters

9 On Command Headquarters

The I A F Ensign is flown on the peak or gaff while the appropriate rank flag of the Air Officer Commanding (A O C) at the mast head

10 On I A F Stations

At the Station Headquarters the I A F Ensign is flown on the peak or gaff while appropriate rank flag of the Officer Commanding the Station is flown at the mast head